



REPORT OF LAKES REGION PLANNING COMMISSION

The Lakes Region continues to grow and evolve. Homes and businesses have expanded along major roadways, and many of our communities have experienced dramatic changes. This growth has resulted in a number of regional challenges. The Lakes Region Planning Commission (LRPC) is an organization established to provide area communities with the capability to respond to and shape the pressures of growth in a purposeful way. With a service area covering over 1,200 square miles in Belknap, Carroll, Grafton and Merrimack Counties, the LRPC provides a wide range of planning services to member municipalities. The Commission offers direct and support services including technical assistance, geographic information systems, transportation planning, land use, environmental planning, hazard planning and economic development. Local state, and federal resources primarily fund the LRPC. We are contacted several times daily for answers to local and statewide issues. We also maintain a regular dialogue with state agencies as a resource for the entire Lakes Region. Our goal remains to provide support, knowledge, and leadership to the governments, businesses and citizens of the Lakes Region.

Listed below are some of the services performed on behalf of the Town of Alton and the region in the past fiscal year.

- Completed and distributed the 2007 *Development Activity in the Lakes Region* report on the Lakes Region residential and commercial development trends. Prepared and distributed a new development survey for 2007-2008
- Planned and coordinated the 21st annual household hazardous waste collection in the Lakes Region. Two consecutive Saturdays were designated as collection days for 24 participating communities. An estimated 20,000 total gallons of waste were collected, containerized and transported to EPA approved end-of-life locations around the country.
- In cooperation with area communities, developed an update of the top regional transportation priorities and submitted it to the NHDOT as required by state statute. Continuously to advocate for needed projects.
- Convened several meetings of the LRPC Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) to enhance local involvement in transportation planning and project development. The TAC advises the LRPC on transportation projects of regional significance.
- In cooperation with the NH Local Government Center, hosted and organized three public Municipal law Lectures where practicing attorneys provide a legal perspective on local planning, zoning and other municipal issues. Recent lectures included: procedural Basics for Planning and Zoning Boards; Environmental Permitting: The Role of Local Officials; and Road Access and the Municipal Planning Process.
- Secured funding from the NH Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) to assist local communities with the preparation of all hazard management plans.
- Awarded \$50,000 from the U.S. Economic Development Administration to prepare a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Lakes Region. A completed CEDS will provide communities with improved access to EDA funding for infrastructure and economic development projects, a benefit not currently available.



- Conducted over 160 traffic counts around the region, in cooperation with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (DOT). LRPC is also preparing and updating local road inventories, on a town-by-town basis, that will be used by the DOT.
- Convened six Commission meetings, which featured a diverse range of topics ranging from: a Legislative Night which featured a broad array of proposed legislation, including implementation of a new woodland buffer provisions in shoreland areas, expanding job creation incentives in the LRPC area, swim lines in public waters and promoting agritourism; presentations on climate challenges including global warming and the effects on NH resources and economy as well as opportunities presented by climate change; an update of LRPC's Regional Goals and Objectives which was accomplished with discussions and recommendations over the four area meetings and adoption in September of this year; an amendment to the Standing Rules and Procedures for the LRPC Transportation Advisory Committee; and an opportunity to exchange viewpoints and make recommendations and amendments to the Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act (CSPA).
- Continue to represent the region on several boards and committees related to the economic and environmental well-being of the region, e.g., the Belknap County Economic development Council, the Grafton County Economic Council, the Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee, etc.
- Reviewed project proposals through the NH Intergovernmental Review Agreement that provides the region and local communities an opportunity to respond to applications seeking state and federal aid. LRPC reviewed many proposals having a combined investment total greater the \$131 million in the Lakes Region.
- Held a hand-on GIS workshop for local officials on the use of GIS.
- Authorized and presented a model steep slope ordinance for use by municipalities interested in preserving steep slopes, in cooperation with the NH Department of Environmental Services.
- Continue to represent the region at meetings of the Lakes Region Household Hazardous Product Facility in order to explore the ways and means that the facility may encourage other communities to participate.
- Completed an inventory of age restricted housing in New Hampshire in cooperation with the NH Housing Finance Authority.
- Completed a Scholl Enrollment Study which showed that the number of school-aged children generated from a new single family housing is declining in both NH and the Lakes Region.
- Conducted the Granite Municipal GIS Survey in cooperation with the UNH Complex Systems Research Institute
- Ordered and distributed many copies of the NH Planning and Land Use Regulations books to member planning boards at considerable savings.
- Assisted local officials with information from the Alton Community Survey.
- Provided school information in the Lakes Region to local citizen.



- Coordinated with town staff regarding information required for LRPC to review a subdivision application that was determined by the planning board to be developed of regional impact.
- Provided a planning board member with information on conservation subdivisions, steep slopes, and a definition for farming.
- Responded to a request from the town for the development of a Local Emergency Operations Plan (LEOP).
- Participated in the Prospect Mountain High School Career Day, focusing on the role and need for quality planning service.
- Completed the final drafts of the Vision, Land Use, and natural hazards chapters of the Master Plan, in cooperation with town planning staff and board members.
- Attended a preliminary meeting with the town planning staff and master plan committee members to discuss the choice of project components for the next phase of the master Plan.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sara McRedmond
Administration



**Tom Hoopes, Chairman
Alton Planning Board**